

Aberystwyth University

Between Spaces

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<http://www.paulcroft.org>

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between

spaces

introduction

Two years ago, the artist Pete Williams, founder of Print Market Project in Cardiff, proposed a printmaking show to colleagues in two other studios: East London Printmakers and Aberystwyth School of Art. The premise was that each studio member would invite one other artist, and the six artists would all ponder the subject of “Space” and its unique resonance and personal meaning for each individual.

Print Market Project, in Cardiff, and East London Printmakers in Hackney are both self-funded independent print workshops, governed by their members and existing as creative artistic hubs for the local community. Danielle Creenaune works as an independent artist in Barcelona, Spain, and Paul Croft is based in a university setting in Aberystwyth.

Having had no group consultation beyond this very open brief, it is interesting to see that the works in this show have much in common. There is a refreshing range of experimental and innovative techniques and approaches to the medium of print, and an insight into printmaking as it stands today.

Pete Williams’s woodcut prints are on a monumental scale. Likewise, Steve Edwards’ dynamic diver print measures out the physicality of the human body in near life-size proportions. The spaces depicted within Paul Croft’s prints, on the other hand, have an intimacy of a private collection, creating a thoughtful space within our imaginations. Imagination and the natural world coincide within Danielle Creenaune’s abstract renditions of the outdoors, her fluid brushstrokes capturing the vigor and clarity of fervent growth. The internal space within the mind is the subject of Wuon-Gean Ho’s mask prints, which layer history and emotion on the confines of the face. Finally, ever-evolving physical space is explored in book format, with Lou Thornton’s bound works.

Even though they are located far from each other, we can see new connections and categories linking the work of the artists from the different workshops. This affinity points towards the existence of some kind of collective unconscious: a kind of creative force that transcends physical location.

Wuon-Gean Ho

between

The collection of printmakers within this exhibition demonstrates a positive engagement with the search for a space in which to explore the status of print itself. The status of printmaking within a wider art historical context is subject to an analysis of the infinite paradox of the copy and the original, which then impacts on our reading of printmaking as a potential document and its subsequent position as an art object. This colours our understanding and reception of print, which presupposes a position for printmakers. This is not because printmaking should be regarded as fundamentally different from other mediums but that the artists' chosen here are not limited to the normative processes and expectations associated with the act and traditional status of print.

The investigative tone within this exhibition is given further integrity when we consider that the artists included offer a range of studio and workshop possibilities for the creation of their work. The PMP and ELP are self-funded independent print workshops, Danielle Creenaune works as an independent artist and Paul Croft runs the stone lithography department at Aberystwyth University. This has significance for how we consider the images and their context and that of their making.

The reading of the work is subject to us understanding the political considerations that artists are under in order to produce their work. The act of printing for these artists dictates an investment in resources that is hungry for physical space as well as the financial constraints of that space. This is evident in the ambitious scale of Pete Williams's work, which is large enough to challenge the imagined space in

spaces

which print resides and sets out to widen that space with work that refuses to be, *Between Spaces*.

The artists are each entering a visual discourse, which seeks to challenge the canon of print as an aside or a tributary distraction from the mainstay of art production. *Between Spaces* offers a variety of work with ranges of processes, scale and format – a wide remit on offer. This initial collaboration of artists considers not only the position of print but an opportunity to discover a new range.

The well appointed title *Between Spaces* can now be read in a variety of ways, as actual subject matter for Paul Croft and Pete Williams, to a search for physical space for Wuon-Gean Ho and Danielle Creenaune, and an explored psychological space for Steve Edwards. Further still this show demonstrates a discourse about the mimetic nature of print and its position as problematic within a realm of art history that fetishizes the original. This makes the collection here even more challenging when we consider that the artists are working with imagined and mediated spaces that are only possible as art objects.

The artists are attempting to negotiate their way through the philosophical minefield of undermining and challenging the medium whilst at the same time embracing the processes. This is evidenced in Lou Thornton's explorations of non-printing, leading to more conceptual considerations of how space is both limited and constructed.

Corrie Lewis Bishop M.A Art Historian 2013

Danielle Creenaune

Creenaune's landscapes seek the making of a new space which traverses our connection with place via means of associated memory, carrying inherited images and untold stories. The experience of living far from the Australian landscapes of her birth, creates a constant distance, a between space, serving to magnify memories and sensations until they effortlessly merge with her present European surroundings. Recent works deal with the phenomenon of fire within the current Australian landscape and in contrast to the tragedy often reflected, they reveal the beauty left behind and the landscape's power to resist and regenerate.

Australian born artist Danielle Creenaune completed a Bachelor and a Master of Art at the University of New South Wales, Sydney Australia, in 1997. She has lived abroad since 2000, living in London for several years until moving to Barcelona in 2006. Her work has received numerous print awards internationally and is held in public collections including the National Gallery of Australia.

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Our experience of landscape is spatial and the sensations we feel go beyond what is seen visually. The between spaces in a forest are as equally beguiling and beckoning as the natural forms which punctuate it. Spaces between forest trunks, branches, and dark undergrowth summon intrigue and house other presences arising from our memory and imagination. My work explores the dialogue between how landscape is seen, how it is perceived through our library of pre-lived experiences and how this is reflected through the visual language of gesture.

right: *Tinderbox I*
Lithograph and indian ink on Kawasa paper
49 x 66cm 2013 unique print







top left: *Cinco Piedras I*
Stone lithograph, chine collé
22 x 27.5cm 2009 edition of 5

top right: *Cinco Piedras II*
Stone lithograph, chine collé
22 x 27.5cm 2009 edition of 5

bottom left: *Cinco Piedras III*
Stone lithograph, chine collé
22 x 27.5cm 2009 edition of 5

bottom right: *Cinco Piedras IV*
Stone lithograph, chine collé
22 x 27.5cm 2009 edition of 5



above: *Cinco Piedras*

Portfolio of five stone lithographs with title page, printed by Danielle Creenaune
Cloth bound solander box by Angels Arroyo Barcelona

Paul Croft

Objects: still life, the found object, flotsam and jetsam and the museum artifact have played a significant role in much of Croft's work and appear as compositional elements in drawings and prints. Over 30 years they have also been the source of inspiration for the development of visual language, symbols, alphabets, and letterforms that more recently, have been leading to the invention of an imaginary alphabet called Greganyce.

Initially based upon collections of found objects, this lexicon has been expanding steadily to include characters acquired from Japanese, Chinese and other pictographical sources and incorporates combination of graphic devices both invented and borrowed. Increasingly too, the work is concerned with the classification and presentation of language in charts, diagrams, lists, lexicons, dictionaries and as thesauri.

Croft trained as a printmaker at Edinburgh College of Art and later specialized in lithography, qualifying as a Master Printer at The Tamarind Institute in Albuquerque, he is now Head of Printmaking at The School of Art Aberystwyth.

www.paulcroft.org

What interests me particularly is the space between the graphic development of symbols and characters and their subsequent phonetic sound and meaning. I am intrigued by the historical development of letterforms from their association with visual symbols to more abstract concepts of meaning. The spaces between symbols, characters and letters and how they these relate to understanding, sound and communication are inspiring me to develop language in the form of prints, type, fonts and text that ultimately may lead to work that is as much aural as it is visual.

right: *Les Amulets a Musée Banner Pan Cube*
Lithograph
44 x 57cm 2011







above left: *Les Amulets a Musée Sippar Pan Cube*
Lithograph
24 x 18cm 2010

above right: *Les Amulets a Musée Sippar Pan*
Lithograph
24 x 18cm 2010



above left: *Les Amulets a Musée Pan Chequer*
Lithograph
24 x 18cm 2011

above right: *Les Amulets a Musée Sippar Chequer Pan*
Lithograph
24 x 18cm 2011

Steve Edwards

Living in London for 30 years has given Edwards many opportunities for observing the city and its multi-various moods. His first city image was created for a group show entitled *Love Letter to London* at the Greater London Assembly. He created *Bridge – east*, a view from Waterloo Bridge, one of his favourite places to stand, look, and feel thoroughly 'urban'. As this London series has grown, he has become interested in the dialogue between the sky and the city beneath.

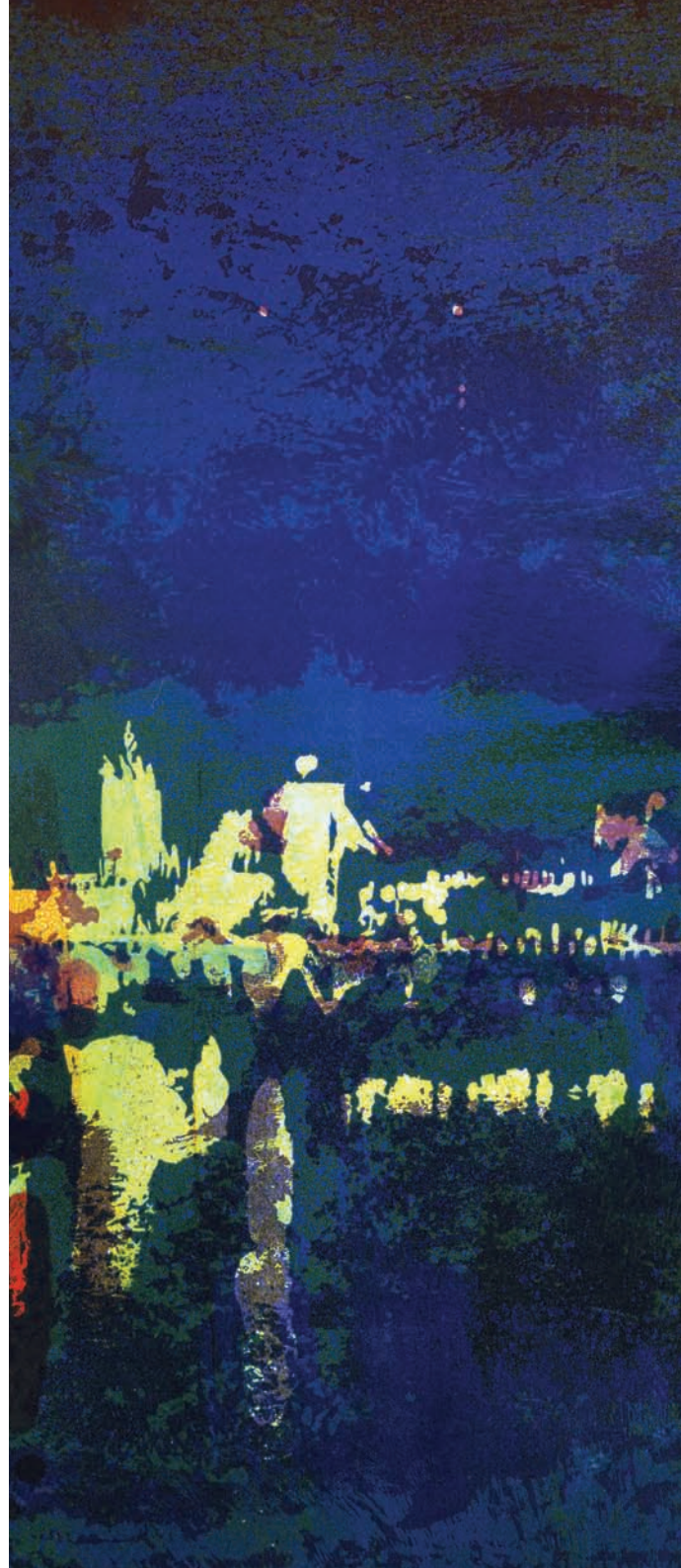
Another strand of Edwards' work is centred around masculinity and the absent father. His main source of inspiration is the internet and its low-fi displays of manhood. He is drawn to the ways in which men choose to portray themselves in this virtual arena, from the intimate/confessional to the codified/fetishised.

He has been a member of East London Printmakers since 2005 and Greenwich Printmakers since 2011, and has shown extensively here in the UK and abroad.

www.stevedwardsart.com
stevedwards.blogspot.com

Between spaces are the cracks. We show the world a face we have cobbled together from notions of respectability and fitting in. We hope that a photograph taken of us captures this acceptable face. But there are cracks. There have to be, because we are not pristine, seamless surfaces. I like cracks. I like to look at what lies between spaces – the detritus and the dust, the unacceptable and the un-presentable, the lost and the other.

right: *Waterloo Night - west*
Etched and cut lino with monoprint
47 x 89cm 2013 unique









left: *Flex*
Etched and cut lino
30 x 30cm 2009 edition of 40

right: *Cam 3*
Etched and cut lino
52 x 35cm 2009 edition of 10

Wuon-Gean Ho

Wuon-Gean Ho graduated in History of Art from Cambridge University, before taking up a Japanese Government Scholarship in 1998 to study traditional woodblock printmaking in Kyoto. She has since held residencies in various countries, notably Caldera Arts Center, Crow's Shadow Institute of the Arts and the Sitka Center for Arts and Ecology, all in the USA; the Bluecoat Arts Centre and Aberystwyth School of Art in the UK, and the castle of Montefiore Conca in Italy.

She is the recipient of awards including the John Purcell Paper prize in 2007; the Printmakers' Council prize in 2009; and the Birgit Skiöld Memorial Trust Award of Excellence in 2010. She is an active member of East London Printmakers: working as a technician and printmaking tutor as well as creating her own prints, books and animations.

www.wuongeant.com

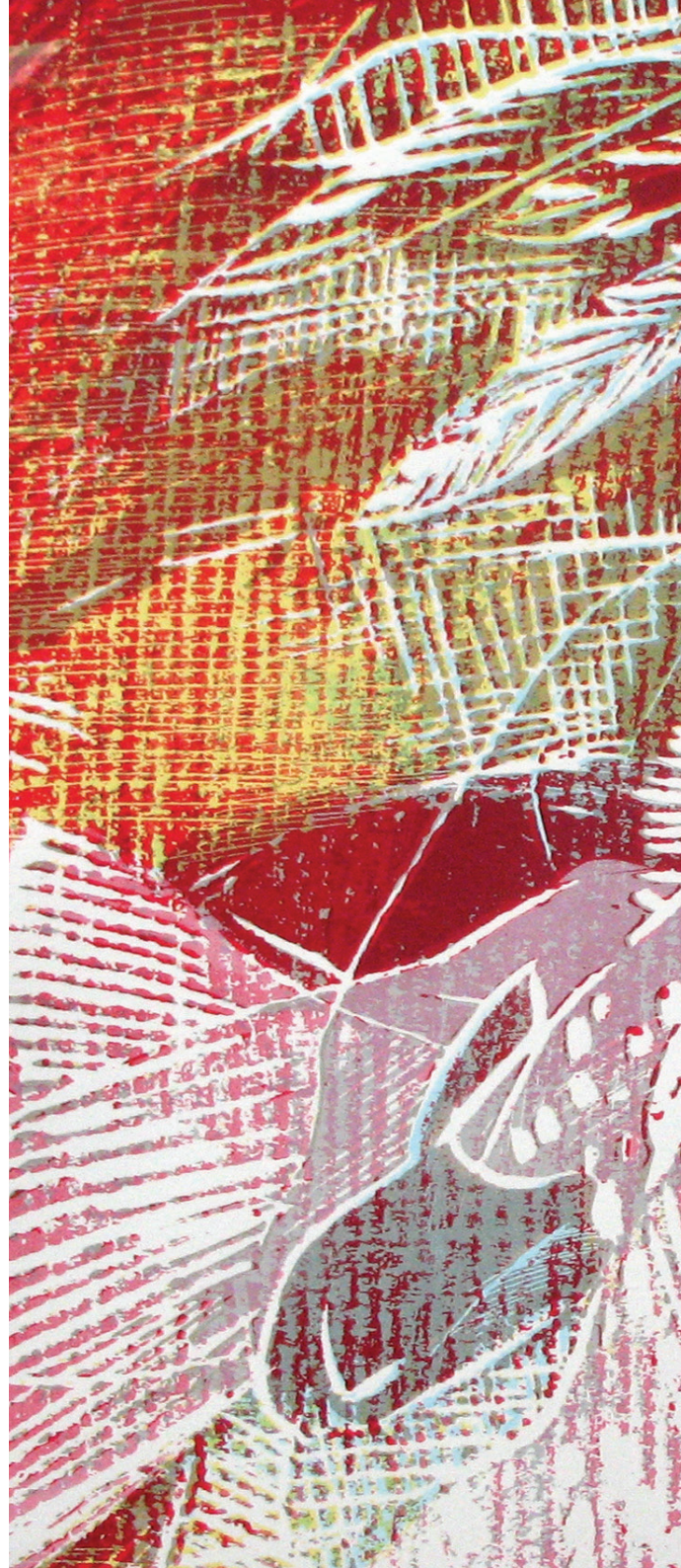
Beneath the skin that veils the face hides our inner worlds. For me, this comprises a jumble of memories, emotions and little prayers for past and future. In this series of prints these thoughts have been projected and magnified on the surface of the skin, showing the space inside the head and shadowing the features.

Far from the traditional function of the mask, these masks do not hide nor generalize, but instead reveal individual and specific truths. These masks do not protect nor disguise, but instead celebrate honesty and transformation. In making the prints I chose particularly valuable memories, and reinforced them by contemplation. The mask prints present to the viewer unspoken information: the story between the lines, the personal spaces that we each inhabit alone.

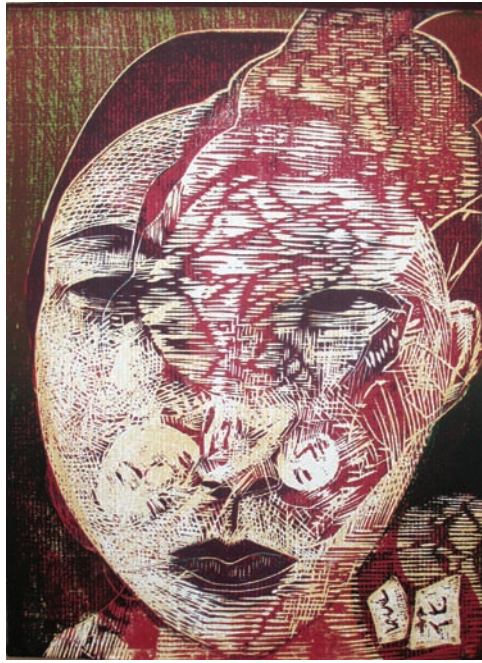
right: *Mask Crane* (detail)

Screenprint

57 x 76cm 2008 edition of 20







right: *Mask Fire*
Screenprint
57 x 76cm 2008 edition of 10



top left: *Mask Beast*
Screenprint
57 x 76cm 2008 edition of 10

top right: *Mask Ka*
Screenprint
57 x 76cm 2008 edition of 10

bottom left: *Mask Lovers*
Screenprint
57 x 76cm 2008 edition of 10

bottom right: *Mask Forest*
Screenprint
57 x 76cm 2008 edition of 10



Lou Thornton

"Print, for me, has always been a low-tech affair with the visual narrative the really important factor. Print has imposed itself upon me." LT

Themes of empty interiors, both physical architectural spaces and internal bodily ones are evident – she wishes to suggest a removal in a way, distance from the visceral. Blind printing is investigated (and to be continued). She hopes to eventually work toward creating nothing at all. The exploration continues.

Lou Thornton gained her degree in fine art (sculpture) at East London University and an MA in print at Brighton University. She helped set up the Printmarket Project in Cardiff (an independent print studio) where she continues with her practice. Lou has exhibited her work both nationally and internationally. She is currently working toward an exhibition at the RK Burt Gallery in Borough, London (June 2013). She is course leader for the Diploma in Foundation Studies (Art & Design) at the Arts Academy Cardiff. Lou has a studio at the Print Market Project.

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Between Spaces developed due to a desire for a visual engagement with current print practitioners. Print can be seen, to an extent, as a lesser vehicle for fine art exploration with an emphasis on process at its core. However, the artists exhibiting in this exhibition create print; often as a by-product of their art or at least not the main directive of their work. There are a variety of relationships with print on display – individual workers, print studio collaborations, educationally funded, independent studios. The survival of these particular possibilities has been brought about by three of the artists shown. One of the others, myself, is an appreciative invited guest.

right: detail from

Cuts must be fast and deep. Solutions to no. 1683 & other stories
Grey board / thread / paper 53cm x 53cm re-assembled 2013







above left: detail from

81 complaints

String / grey board / paper / ink / clip / cloth / found text / letter stamp

38cm x 32cm x 8cm 2012

above right: detail from

A wigwam for a geese's bride

Grey board / paper / thread / letter stamp / ink / rubber stamp

29cm x 14cm x 8cm re-assembled 2012 / 13





top: detail from
Interior no 1
 paper / string / letter stamp (not seen) / blind print
 74cm x 43cm 2013

below left to right: details from
Cuts may be fast and deep. Solutions to no. 1683 & other stories
 paper / string / letter stamp (not seen) / blind print
 74cm x 43cm 2013

photography: Nick Treharne

Pete Williams

This exhibition marks the culmination of work, which Williams began during a three-month residency at Aberystwyth Arts Centre 2010. The final outcomes have transformed into prints and large-scale works shown as part of this exhibition *Between Spaces*. This precious and vital allocation of time for Williams as an artist has truly helped redirect his thoughts and re-focus his passion for an alternative in the printmaking world.

Williams is the co-founder and director of the Print Market Project in Cardiff. This independent space, offers professional artists an opportunity to work within the medium of print, as well as providing excellent facilities for both the individual and small groups. Editioned work is regularly produced for both galleries and museums nationally and internationally.

Williams is also an associate lecturer at Cardiff and Swansea Metropolitan University and Carmarthen School of Art on the BA/MA Fine Art Printmaking.

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Although the processes are predominately print and I am keen to show the diversity of the area, the essence of the work is in the nature of its content. The contrast in scale suggests the significance (or insignificance) of the figure in landscape. Print as a vehicle for production has unending possibilities, here I hope, it is used to advantage in the narrative with process suggesting pace. Spatial concerns are still of interest to me and I suspect this will continue.

right:

Silver Mine Aberystwyth 4.09m 6546s 47.05t (detail)
woodcut block 8 x 8ft 2012









above: *Thomson's Park Cardiff* 4.98m 6406s 41.09t

Woodcut block 8 x 8ft 2009

opposite page top left: *Cliffs at Aberswyth Step* 4.36m 5938s 38.53t

Woodcut block 8 x 8ft 2010

opposite page top right: *Pen Y Fan Brecon Beacons* 5.15m 7687s 1h25t

Woodcut block 8 x 8ft 2010

opposite page bottom left: *Silver Mine Aberystwyth* 4.09m 6546s 47.05t

Woodcut block 8 x 8ft 2012

opposite page bottom right: *Elan Valley Reservoir* 4.56m 6062s 45.15t

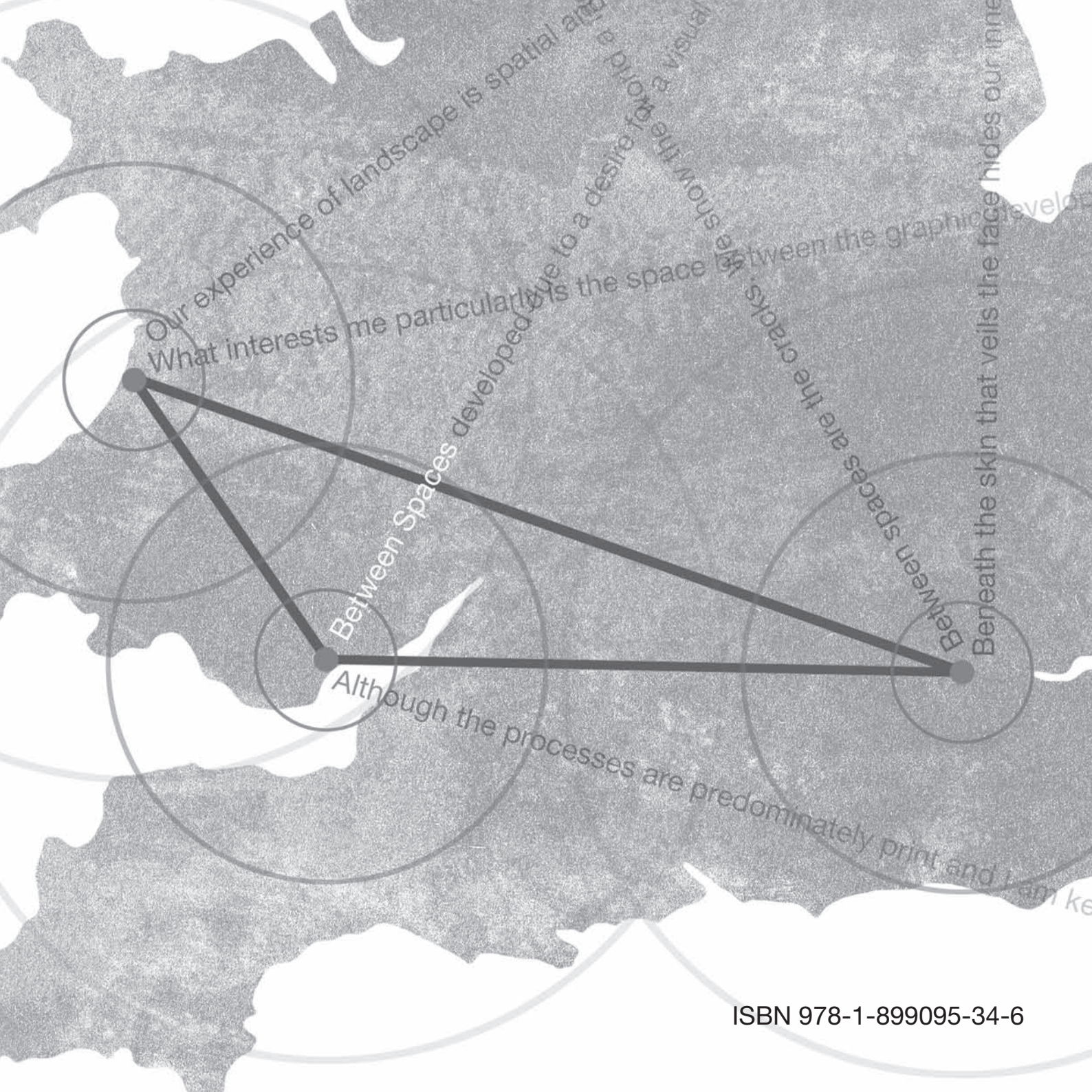
Woodcut block 8 x 8ft 2013

photography: Nick Treharne



PRINT
MARKET
PROJECT





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